

# AP Government

## Project: Designing a Board Game

### Overview:

Teams of 4 will be chartered to create a board game that demonstrates the complexity of a specific and approved topic about the American political system.

### Grading Criterion:

- The game contains no components that deviate from the reality of U.S. politics (Your information must be TRUE and have NO MISTAKES!!)
- The game is comprehensive; it includes as much detail as possible.
- Game components should *teach* as well as *demonstrate* knowledge of US politics.
- The rules are written clearly and sequenced in a logical order.
- The game contains a proper mixture of strategy and luck.
- The game fosters competition among the participants.
- Overall creativity
- Overall presentation
- Other requirements
  - The game can be played by 4 people in about 45 minutes.
  - The game does not require unreasonable amounts of knowledge in order to play. If there are questions for the players to answer, make them about items from these chapters, not obscure presidential trivia.

### Models

I have no student projects since I just dreamt this up this year. However, there are components from commercially available board games that are worth considering.

#### The "Trivial Pursuit" Model

Players have to answer questions in order to advance in the game. Having players answer questions about issues and political history ought to be an element in who gets to be POTUS. However, there is no sequential order to the game, and not really any strategy either.

#### The "Life" or "Chutes and Ladders" Model

These kinds of games are nicely sequenced; they follow a basic pattern but also allow for outside events to happen to the players. ("Campaign aide leaks memo to the press; go back three spaces"). However, they can be pretty close to games of luck.

### The "Monopoly" Model

The strategy involved is a nice plus, but be wary of open-ended games; they take too long to play. The money supply aspect to the game is appropriate vis a vis elections, but also one that complicates your game considerably, and remember, the "winner" is not necessarily the candidate with the most money. The Chance and Community Chest Card concept could be modified to include outside events as well as demonstrate your knowledge of the concepts. ("Fundraiser a stunner! Collect \$500" or "Opponent makes a gaffe in the debate, advance 3 spaces")

### The Chess Model

DO NOT TRY TO DESIGN A PURE STRATEGY GAME.

You might as well go study Government in college and then sign up to work for a real US political campaign in 2004 and make it a career. When you have figured out how to capture all the strategy involved in politics into a board game, please let me as well as the American people know about it.

### **Other considerations and questions**

- Designing a game where the players compete directly against one another is inherently more complex than designing one where the players compete with the game. While I reward risk-taking, be careful about trying to make up the perfect game and ending up with a confusing mess.
- Be sure that there are no "dead ends" in the game.
- How will you determine the winner? Is it the last person in the game? If so, how will others be eliminated? Is it the first one to the finish line? If so, how is advancement obtained?
- What materials do you need? (Dice? Tokens? Cardstock? I am providing the boards and nothing more)
- How are you going to divide up the work among team members? I suggest that you schedule a meeting somewhat before the due date so that you can finish the design, building, and testing of the game.

We will evaluate your games by playing them in class and grading them according to a rubric based on the criteria above. Plan accordingly. This project should be fun, but it is NOT easy!!

## AP Government

Team being Evaluated: \_\_\_\_\_

**Board Game Project Rubric** Evaluators: \_\_\_\_\_

You must fill out one of these for your own team prior to Thursday's class. You will also fill out one of these for the game that you play. Grade inflation makes you look silly.

Criterion: **The rules are written clearly and sequenced in a logical order.**

Teachers  
Rating

1	2	3	4	5
Missing	Weak	Pretty Good	Strong	Amazing
			Met expectations	Very thorough

Comments:

Criterion: **The game's essential design incorporates key features of the U.S. political topic/subject.**

Teachers  
Rating

1	2	3	4	5
Missing	Weak	Pretty Good	Strong	Amazing
			Met expectations	Very thorough

Comments:

Criterion: **The game details demonstrate knowledge of the U.S. political topic/subject.**

Teachers  
Rating

1	2	3	4	5
Missing	Weak	Pretty Good	Strong	Amazing
			Met expectations	Very thorough

Comments:

Criterion: **The game TEACHES players about the U.S. political topic/subject you have chosen as they play.**

Teachers  
Rating

1	2	3	4	5
Missing	Weak	Pretty Good	Strong	Amazing
			Met expectations	Very thorough

Comments:

Criterion:     **The game combines features of other games, includes some strategy or knowledge in addition to luck, and it fosters competition among the participants.**

Teachers  
Rating

1	2	3	4	5
Missing	Weak	Pretty Good	Strong	Amazing
			Met expectations	Very thorough

Comments:

Criterion:     **The game is comprehensive: it includes components and topics from throughout the subject you have chosen.**

Teachers  
Rating

1	2	3	4	5
Missing	Weak	Pretty Good	Strong	Amazing
			Met expectations	Very thorough

Comments:

Criterion:     **Presentation and craftsmanship are neat and professional.**

Teachers  
Rating

1	2	3	4	5
Sloppy	Sketchy	Pretty Good	Strong	Amazing
			Met expectations	Very thorough

Comments:

Criterion:     **Overall creativity.**

Teachers  
Rating

1	2	3	4	5
Missing	Standard	Pretty Good	Strong	Amazing
			Met expectations	Very thorough

Comments:

Criterion:     **The reflective narrative properly explains the game design considerations.**

Teachers  
Rating

1	2	3	4	5
Missing	Weak	Pretty Good	Strong	Amazing
			Met expectations	Very thorough

Comments:

Final Rating & Rationale

					Teachers Rating
1	2	3	4	5	
Missing	Weak	Pretty Good	Strong Met expectations	Amazing Very thorough	

Comments: